

Appendix 4a: Interview Protocols

This is the full version of the writing development interview protocols. An abbreviated version appears in appendix 4 of the print version of the book.

Entry Interview

An asterisk (*) indicates question sets asked of both minors and nonminors.

Questions for Nonminors

State the name of the interviewee, the interviewer, and the date (including year) that the interview is being conducted.

***General—Writerly Self-Image**

1. How would you describe yourself as a writer when you began at UM? How would you describe yourself as a writer now?
 - a. Probe: What language have you developed to talk about yourself as a writer or how you learn to write?
 - b. Probe: If they say they do not describe themselves as a writer, ask: How do you describe the role of writing in your life?
2. To what extent would you say you have grown as a writer? To what would you attribute this growth?
3. What are your goals for yourself as a writer? Have these changed since entering the Minor in Writing?

***Transfer**

4. Thinking across your writing experiences at UM (and transfer institution if applicable), what do you think it means to write well?
5. What do you think is most important in learning to write?
6. Which First-Year Writing Requirement course did you take? What did you learn in this class that you have continued to use in your writing?
 - a. Probe: What language did you develop in this course to talk about yourself as a writer or about how you learn to write?
7. Did you take Writing 100? If yes, what did you learn there that you have continued to use?
8. What is your concentration? Have you had an opportunity to do writing in your concentration? What kinds?
 - a. Probe: What effect have those experiences had on you as a writer?
 - b. Probe: How confident do you feel about writing in your concentration? (Probe for specific examples.)

Writing Experiences

9. What experiences in and out of the classroom have had an effect on your writing?
10. How has your writing process changed as a result of these experiences?
11. If I use the term “reflective writing,” what does that mean to you?

- a. Probe: Have you used reflective writing in your own writing processes (whether assigned in courses or voluntary)?
12. What have been your experiences working with other writers in your courses (or in other contexts)?
 - a. Probe: Have you done workshopping or peer review? Group or collaborative writing projects?
13. If you were going to give someone advice about writing, what are some things they should think about as they begin writing a paper?
14. What is your concentration? Have you had an opportunity to do writing in your concentration? What kinds?
 - a. Probe: What effect have those experiences had on you as a writer?
 - b. Probe: How confident do you feel about writing in your concentration? (Probe for specific examples.)
15. Have you had any experiences with new-media writing (e.g., writing for blogs or websites, using sound or video, even PowerPoint presentations, etc.)? If so, what have those experiences looked like?
 - a. Probe: What effect have those experiences had on you as a writer?
16. So, you've been uploading pieces of writing to the study archive on CTools. How has that process been going for you?
17. What pieces did you choose for the archive? Why did you choose them?
 - a. Probe for reflections on these artifacts and on their choices.

Future

18. What kinds of writing do you think will be most valuable for your career?
19. If you could tell your teachers one thing about writing, or how to teach writing, what would you say?
20. Any other comments?

Questions for Minors Only

Gateway Course

1. What impact has the minor Gateway course (Writing 200) had, overall, on your writing?
2. What impact has it had on your sense of yourself as a writer?
3. What have your experiences of working with other writers in the course been?
4. The minor Gateway course emphasized reflective writing in various forms. How would you describe your experience of this kind of reflection?
5. Are you still using reflection in your current writing (whether assigned or voluntary)?
 - a. Probe: If the student is not doing other course writing this semester, ask: Do you find yourself using reflective writing in other contexts, besides writing papers?
6. How would you describe your experiences using new-media writing (blogs, remediation project, etc.) in Writing 200?
7. The next couple questions are about your Gateway portfolio. (Pull the student's portfolio up on the computer screen.) Can you walk me through it a bit?
8. Separate from the other new-media writing you did in Writing 200, how would you describe your experiences creating the portfolio, in particular?

- a. Probe: What were your aims for the portfolio? What kinds of choices did you make in building it?
- 9. What impact would you say creating the portfolio has had on your writing?
 - a. Probe for specific examples.
 - b. Probe: What was the impact of the reflective writing in the portfolio?
- 10. How has your writing process changed as a result of these experiences in the Gateway course? (Probe for specific examples.)

Future

- 11. What kinds of writing do you think will be most valuable for your career?
- 12. If you could tell your teachers one thing about writing, or how to teach writing, what would you say?
- 13. What suggestions do you have for the minor Capstone course that we are developing this summer (the course in which you will create your final minor portfolio)?
- 14. Any other comments?

Exit Interview

An asterisk (*) indicates question sets that were asked of both minors and nonminors.

Questions for Nonminors

***General—Writerly Self-Image**

- 1. How do you describe yourself as a writer?
 - a. Probe: If they say they do not describe themselves as a writer, ask: how do you describe the role of writing in your life?
- 2. How would you describe yourself as a writer when you began here at University of Michigan?
 - a. Probe: To what extent would you say you have grown and changed since then, as a writer? To what would you attribute this growth?
- 3. As you graduate, what are your goals for yourself as a writer?

***Transfer**

- 4. Thinking across your writing experiences at UM (and any transfer institution, if applicable), what do you think it means to write well?
- 5. Which upper-level writing courses have you taken? What were your experiences in those courses?
 - a. Probe: What effect did those experiences have on you as a writer?
 - b. Probe: Do you still make use of what you learned in those courses in your writing now?
- 6. What other writing courses have you taken? How have these affected your writing?
- 7. Did you take these writing courses in your concentration? Whether yes or no, how have these writing courses affected the writing you do in your concentration?
 - a. Probe: How confident do you feel about writing in your concentration? (Probe for specific examples.)

8. How often have you used skills or strategies learned in one of those writing classes in your other courses? Can you give some examples?

Writing Experiences

9. Thinking back over the last two years, what experiences, in and out of the classroom, have had an effect on your writing?
- Probe: How has your writing process changed as a result of these experiences?
10. If I use the term “reflective writing,” what does that mean to you?
- Probe: Have you recently used reflective writing in your own writing processes (whether assigned in courses or voluntary)?
11. What have your recent experiences been of working with other writers in your courses (or in other contexts)?
- Probe: Have you done workshopping or peer review? Group or collaborative writing projects?
12. Now that you are about to graduate, what advice would you give to college students about writing—what are some things they should think about as they begin writing a paper?
13. Have you had any experiences with new-media writing, such as writing for blogs or websites, making an electronic portfolio, Mportfolio, or digital portfolio? What were the specific experiences? (Probe for specific examples).
- Probe: What effect have those experiences had on you?
 - Probe: Have these experiences affected your sense of your writing? How so?
 - If yes to electronic portfolio, probe:*
 - How has this experience affected your writing or sense of yourself as a writer?
 - How do you think these experiences would have been different if this had been a hard-copy or paper portfolio (the kind people put in three-ring binders), not an electronic portfolio?
 - Have these experiences pushed your writing in any new directions? How so?
 - Has your eportfolio helped you understand the writing and learning you have done elsewhere in the university in new and different ways?
14. So, you’ve been uploading pieces of writing to the study archive on CTools. How has that process been going for you?
15. Why did you choose the pieces you chose to upload for the archive?
- Probe: What was it like looking back over your old writing and uploading some of it for this study? Did this process make you think differently about your writing? How so?
16. Finally, what do you think instructors should know about teaching writing at the undergraduate level?
17. Any other comments?

Questions for Minors

Capstone Course

1. What impact has the minor Capstone course (Writing 400) had, overall, on your writing?

- a. Probe: Has this course had an impact on your writing process? How so?
- b. Probe: Has this course had an impact on your sense of yourself as a writer?
2. What effect has the experience of the Capstone project had on you as a writer?
 - a. Probe: Why did you choose the project that you chose?

Capstone Portfolio

3. These next few questions are about your Capstone eportfolio. (Have the student pull up his or her eportfolio on the computer screen.) Can you tell me about the most memorable aspect of your experience with the eportfolio?
 - a. Probe: What were your aims for the eportfolio? (What narrative did you hope to tell?) How do you feel your eportfolio addresses those aims?
 - b. Did you design the eportfolio (regarding navigation, links, media, visual design, etc.) to create a particular reader experience? Can you give some specific examples of your design choices?
4. Did you notice any relationships among your artifacts as you created your eportfolio?
 - a. Probe: What relationships did you want your readers to notice?
5. Do you think creating the eportfolio has had an effect on your writing? How so?
 - a. Probe for specific examples.
 - b. Probe: What did you learn from the reflective writing in the eportfolio—both the evidence-based essay you wrote and the contextual reflections?
6. What could people interested in writing development—including program administrators like those at Sweetland—learn about writing development from your Capstone eportfolio?

Gateway to Capstone

7. Now we'd like you to reflect back on your Gateway course as well. How did your experience in the Capstone course compare to your experience in the Gateway course?
8. What have your experiences been of working with other writers throughout the minor?
9. What are the differences you see between the Gateway and Capstone eportfolios?
10. The Gateway and Capstone courses emphasized reflective writing in various forms. How would you describe your experience with this kind of reflection?
 - a. Probe: Are you still using reflection in your current writing (whether assigned or voluntary)?
11. Has this reflection given you new ways to talk about your writing—new terms or concepts? What are they? The minor program is still relatively new. Are there any suggestions you would have for instructors or administrators for this program?
12. More generally, what do you think professors should know about teaching writing at the undergraduate level?
13. Any other comments?